



NORFOLK

TO: The Honorable City Council

REVIEWED: Ronald H. Williams, Jr. Deputy City Manager

FROM: George M. Homewood, AICP, CFM, Director, Department of City Planning

COPIES TO: Leonard M. Newcomb III, CFM, Assistant Director, Department of City Planning
Susan Pollock, CFM, Principal Planner, Department of City Planning

SUBJECT: Application for a Special Exception – MP Island Café

DATE: September 11, 2015

On the September 15, 2015 public hearing agenda, City Council will be reviewing a request to operate an entertainment establishment with alcoholic beverages on property located at 5957 East Virginia Beach Boulevard, Suites 5-7. These properties consist of a 9,785 square foot space within the Military Crossing Shopping Center. The applicant proposes to expand his existing business into an adjacent suite and increase the total capacity of the restaurant from 240 to 503. This site is zoned C-3 (Retail Center District) which permits entertainment establishments by special exception.

Prior to the July 23, 2015 Planning Commission public hearing, the Lake Taylor Civic League contacted members of the Planning Commission with concerns about the entertainment options at MP Island Café. These concerns stemmed from an event flyer circulated by MP Island Café.

After conducting a duly advertised public hearing on July 23, 2015, at which the applicant and proponents spoke, the Planning Commission voted 2 to 4 (Mr. Hales was absent) to recommend denial of the application based on the concerns of the Lake Taylor Civic League and the increase in total capacity. The majority of the Planning Commission advised the applicant to meet with the Lake Taylor Civic League again prior to the next City Council public hearing.

The Planning Department received a letter, dated August 6, 2015, addressed to the City Council from the Glenrock Civic League. The letter expresses support for the MP Island Café special exception request.

The Planning Department received a letter on September 9, 2015 addressed to the City Council from the Lake Taylor Civic League. In the letter, the civic league expresses general support for the special exception request following a presentation by the applicant at their August meeting, but concerns remain over the proposed total capacity of 503. In addition, the civic league requests that the approval of this special exception include an 18-month sunset clause.

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Date: August 6, 2015

RE: M&P's Restaurant Expansion Request

Honorable Council Members,

The Glenrock community presents, herewith, further reasoning on M & P's restaurant expansion as heard by the Planning Commission last month. Glenrock is within a short walking distance to this business. Having thorough knowledge of its operations, and having met personally with the owners, we feel it is important to have our opinion before the council as a matter of public record.

The owners seek to expand business operations into the adjacent vacant unit. As we understand it, this effort is to further segment business activities from their main-dining facility. With full understanding and acknowledgement of all events which occur on a daily and weekly basis, we support this expansion. Having talked with Norfolk Police Department to review all calls for services since January 2015, as it pertains to Military Crossing Shopping Center, none raise concern for our community. All reports completed by the police have been property-crime related. The owners comply with all laws and codes set forth to govern their activities, have implemented additional security and is not identified as public concern; therefore, council should grant this request.

The Glenrock community, which is nearest to this business, has not suffered any negative impacts. Glenrock has one of the best crime statistics within the city of Norfolk. If M & P's were to become a public concern which negatively affects our quality of life, it will be known and communicated immediately.

Thank you for your consideration and honorable service to our community and the citizens of Norfolk.

Sincerely



David Hicks
President
Glenrock Community Association
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Cc.
Glenrock Residents
Norfolk City Planning Council
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Palmer

Members of the City Council,

I am writing on behalf of the Lake Taylor Civic League concerning the expansion of MP Island Café. There were concerns about the expansion that came about after our initial vote to approve the expansion.

Mr. Palmer from the MP Island Café came to our August Civic League meeting to present his plans and answer questions about the concerns some of our members had. Most of those concerns have been laid to rest as a result but some remain. The concerns that remain stem from the proposed total capacity of 503 people.

The primary concern about that many people is for trouble that started inside to escalate once the involved parties are outside. Our members watch the news and don't want to see happen in our area what has happened at and around night clubs in Virginia Beach. Traffic control in and out of the area for that many people is another, especially with a sports bar at the other end of the shopping center.

The Lake Taylor Civic League is asking for an 18 month sunset clause be added to the approval that would make the approval permanent if there are no incidents within that time period. Mr. Palmer thinks he has a solid plan in place to prevent any disturbances and this time would prove or disprove that.

We are glad that Mr. Palmer is doing well in that location and can expand but we also want to be sure the expansion doesn't bring disruptions to the community. To this end we urge that the approval be provisional for the above mentioned 18 month time period.

Sincerely,

Tony Speight, President
Lake Taylor Civic League